

# Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

PLEASE TYPE THIS EVALUATION FORM & EMAIL IT TO VICTORIA ABROAD AS A WORD DOCUMENT

## A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	LLB BCOM
Major(s)	Law Economics
Exchange Institution	Bocconi University
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Semester 1, 2016.

## B: Finances

Please detail your basic costs in New Zealand dollars. This will help future students plan their own budgets. (Enter your number rounded to the nearest dollar.)

Books	\$0 (Use Library books)
Accommodation	\$350euro a month (sharing a room)
Return Airfare	\$2000NZ
Local Transportation	\$25euro a month
Meals	\$50euro a week
Visa	Didn't have one
Health & Insurance	\$600NZ 1cover
Personal Spending	\$50euro a week
Communications (phone, etc.)	\$25euro a month
Other fees (specify)	Travel – depends how much you wish to do.
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	Flights in and out of Milan were very reasonable so if you can afford travelling I believe Milan makes a great base to do so!

How did your financial expenses compare to what you originally expected to spend?

Similar to as expected. Flights cheaper. Milan is affordable in terms of food but can be expensive for accommodation. You can make accommodation cheap if you share a room or are further out from the city however.

By what means did you maintain your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, foreign bank account, travelers checks, etc)?

Cash passport but it is very slow to move money over so I had to use my NZ card everynow and then which was fine. Too much admin to open a foreign account I would say.

What financial advice would you give students attending the same university as you?

Save as much as you can and buy groceries or pizza to keep meals cheap. There is a cheap Panzerotti place

opposite the front of the University where you can get lunch for \$3euro or the University Café downstairs is cheap with \$2.50euro pizza and the like.

What was the average cost of a can of coke or coffee in your host country?

Coffee very cheap: 20 cents at University or 1.50 at cafes.

Coke: 1-2 euros depending if from the supermarket or from a café.

**C: Visas & Insurance** *\*Please note this information is recommended by VUW students & current at the time of their exchange. For all up-to-date visa information you must check with the embassy/consulate of your host university.*

Did you have to apply for a visa? If so, was it difficult? What was the process, how long did it take and how much did it cost?

Yes, it was free. You request it from the Wellington Embassy with a copy of your flights, insurance, bank account statement.

Do you have any advice for future students when applying for visas to your host country?

Upon arrival they suggest you apply for a permit of residence where staying for more than 3months. This generally doesn't arrive until you leave anyway. Because I travelled a lot I didn't apply for it but it comes at your own risk as you generally should apply for this. The cost if around \$150euro.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance? Or a particular insurance they recommended? If Yes, what was it and how much did it cost?

The visa process requires some insurance.

What insurance company did you use and would you recommend it to future students?

I used 1cover which was nice and affordable and protected me from all the necessities such as home and contents cover. I haven't yet made a claim but I think they are a good company as far as I know.

## D: Academics at Host University

Which courses did you take while on exchange? Please rate the difficulty of each course (1-5, 1 = Very Easy & 5 = Extremely Difficult) and leave any comments you may have.

Course Title	Language of Instruction	VUW course equivalent or elective	VUW points/credits value	Rating (1-5)	Comments
<b>VUW Trimester 1/YEAR</b>					
Banking Law	English			5	Great teacher and very interesting course.
Introduction to Italian Legal system	English			3	Not as interesting but is multi-choice in part.
European Economic	English			5	Very interesting with a great teacher. Interesting

Policy					learning about the EU while being in the EU!
Sharing economies and Smart Cities	English			5	Very interactive and forward thinking. If you are interested in innovation and entrepreneurship this is a great course. Lots of well informed speakers also.
<b>VUW Trimester 2/YEAR</b>					

### Course Registration/Enrolment

Please describe the registration process at your host university. What kind of help was available?

You have to do it all online with very little help so just make sure you are on a computer as soon as course registration opens.

How successful were you in registering/enrolling for classes you wanted? What advice would you offer to next year's exchange students about registration at your host university?

I didn't get in to all the courses I wanted so you do have to be a little flexible. I worked it out in the end and chose a couple of replacements. It is important to try and pick your courses beforehand as a lot of the popular ones fill up fast!

Do you have any advice for future students when choosing and applying for courses?

Read these reviews and talk to past students to learn more about the courses, at the end of the day you don't really know what it will be like until you take it but you can always change in the first 1-2 weeks.

### Academic Experience

How did your academic experience differ from your time spend at Victoria? Did the academic experience meet your expectations?

Academic experience was similar. The course content was no harder than Victoria but the course often

required more presentations. The lecturers were occasionally late too as is the Italian nature!

How did the style of teaching at your host university compare with that at VUW? How did the workload compare to what you would expect at VUW?

Style of teaching similar in terms of law papers, more interactive with more speakers in terms of commerce papers. Workload was similar but a lot of content was covered in lectures as there are no tutorials at Bocconi.

What would you recommend as an appropriate course load for other VUW students visiting your partner university? What specific courses would you recommend to visiting VUW students? Why?

4-5 papers as at Victoria is what I would recommend especially if you want to enjoy your time on exchange. I definitely recommend Sharing Economies and Smart cities as a paper that educates in a real world way – you get to meet a variety of entrepreneurs and learn about their journeys in a hands on way. Banking law was also great perhaps because I enjoy banking so that may not be for everyone. The teacher however was fantastic so this helped.

What advice would you give VUW students about succeeding academically at your host university?

Just keep on top by going over slides and making notes in your down time. You will be fine!

What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, and internet access at your host university?

Computer facilities were basic so you really do want a laptop if you have one. Library and internet was great although the library would really pack out during exam time so you'd have to arrive early to get a desk or study at your flat some times.

If you went to a country where English is not the native language, how did you prepare for this? Were there any intensive language courses provided by the host university?

I didn't prepare all that much to be honest, I just did my best on arrival. If you can learn some of the basics such as "Hi", "thank you", "numbers" and "do you speak English" you will be fine. It is good to know as much as you can but the basics will get you by and a lot of people speak at least some English. There is an intensive language course available but it hasn't a certain start date so you need to arrive in time for that.

## **E: Accommodation**

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Self found flat.

What were the pros and cons of this form of accommodation?

The pros were the independence and the ability to have visitors come and stay. Also a flat provides for a better location than the halls provided in Milan. The cons were having to negotiate and deal with a landlord however this is pretty standard when organising a flat.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Definitely find a flat over a hostel. Hostels are expensive and in a worse location.

How early can you move into accommodation?

Depends on what accommodation you sort. I moved into a temporary hostel Ostello Bello which was great and stayed there for four nights before securing flat. The cost was \$40euro a night but it included food and was a very supportive environment.

What options were available for meal plans or cooking facilities? How satisfied were you with the food?

I was self-catered in my flat.

If you lived in off-campus housing, how easy was it to find? What should future VUW exchange students know about living off-campus?

We were given a number from the Ostello Bello manager so it was a bit of a fluke but you can look on airbnb and on facebook rental sites to find a place.

Do you have any tips of advice for future students when applying for accommodation?

Book into a temporary hostel and stay there while you find a place.

## **F: Personal & Cultural Connections**

What was it like making friends? How successful were you at making friends with local (i.e., not international) students?

It was very easy to make friends as every body is wanting to. Get involved with ERASMUS the Bocconi social group and they throw lots of social events where you can make friends. They even plan trips to nearby Italian cities.

What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange country/university?

It was so exciting so culture shock wasn't to much of an issue for me. The one thing that perhaps proved stressful was being out of touch with home so I recommend getting a sim card asap. The agency 3 is very good so I would try them or TIM. I had serious issues with Vodafone.

What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging? How would you recommend students to prepare for these differences?

The language at times was challenging so I guess you could try and prepare for this more than I did.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

The food! Pizza, wine and Gelato!

How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?

Everybody was lovely and very welcoming. Faculty members were helpful and students in particular exchange students were all very quick to include each other. Local people at Vodafone – not so kind!!

As far as you could tell, how easy would it be for students with disabilities to study at your partner university? For students who are visible minorities in your host country? For students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?

Depends what disabilities but If you spoke to the Faculty I'm sure they could help. I wouldn't exactly call being LGBT a disability to be honest but as far as Italy goes and Milan in particular the people are very open-minded so I don't think there would be any issues in that respect.

Did you face any issues regarding discrimination in your host country? What were they, and what advice would you give to future students?

No, not personally although they do like you to at least open in Italian sometimes be it just saying Hi and asking if they speak Italian in Italian.

### **G: Extra-curricular/Social Activities**

What organized activities (clubs, sports, etc.) were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

ERASMUS organized a range of activities from sports games to parties. It can be difficult to get involved with a sports team for one semester I imagine but if you were there for a year I assume it would be better.

What do you recommend other visiting students see or do on their weekends or holidays?

Go to Lake Como and Lake Garda! Both beautiful places. If you want to go further Sardegna is amazing (an island of Italy).

What opportunities were there for students to work on-campus? Off-campus?

I am not sure although I know some exchange students did some work more so near the end of there exchange. You could also be an au pair I imagine.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

I'm not sure to be honest.

### **5 things to take to your host country or region**

1	Marmite
2	A good weekend/week pack for travel. (Aside from your main suitcase).
3	Some basic Italian

4 Some Kiwiana to give to people? Chocolate/ kiwis.

5 An open attitude!

### 5 pieces of useful advice would tell a VUW student going to your host university

1 Printing at University is delayed so you are best to print down the road from the University

2 Get involved with all the ERASMUS events

3 Don't be afraid to email the faculty or the VUW faculty for that matter if you are unsure about anything

4 Make sure all your papers will cross-credit for the required amounts before you leave and again if you change any papers

5 Show up early to the library during exam times or study at a café/flat when its too busy

### Top 5 Things to do

*What are your 'Top 5 Things To Do' future VUW students at your host university or city/country?*

1 Go to the island of Sardegna

2 Go to Lake Como – train to Varenna, take the boat to Bellagio

3 Eat at Pizza Tradizionale on the Milan Canal

4 Eat at the Crepe store two shops down hill from Tradizionale

5 Go to Just Cavalli night club



